

**VERMONT TOBACCO EVALUATION AND REVIEW BOARD**

**Evaluation Committee Meeting**

**October 5, 2015 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM**

**Agency of Human Services, Williston, VT**

**MINUTES**

**Public comment:** None

**FY16 evaluation priorities (discussion/recommendation)**

Alexandra Potter set the stage for the committee to begin to think about evaluation questions pertaining to an evaluation of the Vermont Counter Balance initiative.

Rhonda Williams from VDH shared VDH's objectives around Counter Balance. Year 1 objective was awareness, and future year objectives will focus on education and increasing engagement around point-of-sale changes and improvements in Vermont.

In Vermont the tobacco industry spends approximately \$17,000 in promotions per retail outlet annually. There are approximately 880 tobacco retail licenses in Vermont.

Click [here](#) for link to Counter Balance Vermont campaign.

The "Healthy retailer initiative" was an internal evaluation conducted by VDH including community surveys and retailer surveys. VDH has two rounds of those.

*Action: Rhonda will share the compiled evaluation results.*

**Framing questions for evaluation for counter balance:**

**Formative Evaluation questions:**

- What was the reach of counter balance?
- Are there geographic gaps in our data collection?
- Is our data representative of our state?
- How did our web visit numbers (and other online metrics) compare to other states?
- What was the reach of this initiative? Knowledge of countertools with retailers, parents, kids, teachers, etc.

**Questions about the Outcomes measured in this initiative?**

- How did countertools work in Vermont (a rural, small state) in comparison to NY or Ma? What are other states doing with their data?
- How do low SES communities compare with higher SES communities in regards to retail density, outside advertisement, store placement, and other outcomes?
- What were the results of the survey for visitors to the website?

- Are there things we should do to prepare for the 18 month counter tools store audit data that we could use for pre/posttest?

#### **Products of this Initiative:**

- How can we create tools that are useful to use with kids about product placement and store placement.
- Can we create community based tools for our constituents to increase community awareness?
- Is there data to help us communicate (to public and retailers) that cigarette advertising is really about brand switching and not about letting consumers know where they can purchase cigarettes?
- What tools have been created by other states using countertools?

#### **What is the cost to retailers in Vermont of removing tobacco?**

- What has been the impact (loss of profit) for independent pharmacies of ceasing tobacco sales?
- Is there the opportunity to provide incentives to businesses for removing tobacco (i.e. partnership with localvore).
- Would a map classifying retailers (green, orange, red) on a public website be an effective tool to help more retailers to reduce advertising, limit placement, etc.

#### **Other**

- How do the results of the Healthy Retailer survey inform us? Are there overlaps in questions? Did HR show support for specific policies?
- Are there differences in states with local control of tobacco vs those states that do not have that?
- Should we repeat the local opinion leader survey?

**Next Meeting:** Monday October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2015, AHS Conference Room A, 208 Hurricane Lane, Williston, VT